

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

AID-05 /062 W

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R 061114Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6406

INFO COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 0260

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: THIRD EXTRAORDINARY SESSION: RUMORS OF CABINET RE-SHUFFLE

REF: BANGKOK 0166

SUMMARY. UNCERTAINTY EXISTS WHETHER OPPOSITION HAS ENOUGH VOTES TO CONVENE AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF PARLIAHENT IN ORDER TO VOTE NO-CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT. ALSO RUMORS ABOUT ABOUT ACTORS AND TIMING OF LONG AWAITED CABINET RESHUFFLE. EMBASSY BELIEVES KHUKRIT WILL ANNOUNCE CABINET RESHUFFLE WHEN IT BEST SUITS HIS PURPOSES AND WILL SURVIVE ANY MOTIONS OF NO-CONFIDENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE IS CONTRADICTORY INFORMATION ON WHETHER THE OPPOSITION HAS THE 123 SIGNATURES NECESSARY TO CONVENE AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENT TO DEBATE THE POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND IF KHUKRIT HAS DECIDED ON WHO WILL BE SHUFFLED IN THE PROMISED CABINET RESHUFFLE AND EXACTLY WHEN THIS WILL BE ANNOUNCED.

2. AT 6:00 P.M. LAST EVENI G (JAN 5) THE OPPOSITION SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE SPEAKER A LIST OF ONLY 123 SIGNATURES INSTEAD OF THE 151 REPORTED IN REFTEL. THE LIST
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DID NOT CONTAIN THE SIGNATURES OF HOUSE SPEAKER PRASIT

KANCHANAWAT OR THE OTHER NINE MEMBERS OF HIS SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY (SNP) BECAUSE PRASIT HAD WITHDRAWN THEM FROM THE LIST, APPARENTLY BECAUSE A DEAL HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED FOR AN ADDITIONAL CABINET POST FOR THE SNP IN THE NEW CABINET.

3. ACCORDING TO THE CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS SECTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT, TWO SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY MEMBERS, WHO WOULD HAVE POSTS IN THE NEW CABINET, ALSO WITHDREW THEIR NAMES THIS MORNING (JAN 6). THE OPPOSITION THEREFORE DID NOT HAVE THE NECESSARY 123 SIGNATURES AND AS OF 4:00 P.M. WERE STILL SEEKING FOR ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES.

4. THE THAI PRESS ALSO REPORTED THAT A CABINET RESHUFFLE WOULD SHORTLY BE ANNOUNCED WITH THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY JOINING THE GOVERNMENT AND ALLOTTED FOUR CABINET POSITIONS. THE SOCIAL NATIONALIST AND THE THAI AGRARIAN PARTIES WOULD EACH GAIN ONE ADDITIONAL POST. BUNTHENG THONGSAWAT WOULD MOVE FROM THE INTERIOR MINISTRY TO THE JUSTICE MINISTRY

AND KHUKRIT ASSUMING THE JOB OF INTERIOR MINISTER WAS WEL. AT HIS MORNING PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (JAN 6) KHUKRIT DENIED THERE WOULD BE A CABINET RESHUFFLE AT THIS TIME.

5. KON THAPPARANGSI, SECRETARY OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER TODAY THAT THE OPPOSITION HAD BECOME DISHEARTENED AND DID NOT WANT TO HOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION BECAUSE THEY NOW BELIEVED THAT THEY DID NOT HAVE THE VOTES TO SUSTAIN A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE.

6. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY STILL BELIEVES THAT KHUKRIT WILL NOT RESHUFFLE THE CABINET NOR ANNOUNCE SUCH A RESHUFFLE UNTIL IT BEST SUITS HIS PURPOSES AND NOT BESORE. WE CANNOT PREDICT WHEN THIS WILL BE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT HE WILL SURVIVE ANY MOTIONS OF NO-CONFIDENCE AT THIS TIME.

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